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Statement submitted by Grameen Development & Poverty Alleviation Sangstha (GDPAS), a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

Statement

Advancement of Women

A large number of women of Bangladesh are helpless, for the reason: some of the women are divorced by their husbands, some of the women are considered as dowry. Those women are living under poverty and hand to mouth in Bangladesh, deprived from all humanitarian right like health, education, financial facilities, decision-making, right in marital status, legal right of ancestral poverty etc. Due to illiteracy, they are also the victims of cruelty by the male. They are to face divorce by their husband for giving birth to female children and education facilities are still beyond their reach. Environmental problems are yet another main problem of our country.

Grameen Development & Poverty Alleviation Sangstha (GDPAS) is affiliated with Women Affairs Directorate of Bangladesh. Presently, we are working with maternity mother and vulnerable women for their awareness build up as well as with mother care and income generating activities (IGA) of the women.

Maternity Stipend Program for Women

With the support of Ministry of Women and Child Affairs GDPAS has implemented "Maternal Stipend Program" in Muladi and Barisal Sadar. A total of 1122 lactating mothers has receiving support from the project. The project has provided Capacity building training, awareness raising education on breastfeeding, supplementary food and income generating activities. The organization has organized Group Meeting, training, advocacy regarding these issues.

Pre-Primary Education Program for Women

Since 2012 GDPAS has been implementing "Pre-Primary Education" with the technical assistance by the BRAC. Under this project Organization provided education to 200 pre-school aged students through five established centers. Among the five centers, two were established in Agailjahara Upzila and other three were Gaurnadi Upazila under the Barisal District. GDPAS has experience in working on large scale of pre-Primary school activities.

Reduction of Hazardous Women and Child Education Project

With the support of the ministry of Labor and employment, GDPAS Organization implemented this activity from 2005 to 2008. Under this activity, 450 under privilege children received primary education and six month's skill development training.500 Girls received education through 15 Education centres.

Maternity Stipend Program

With the support of Ministry of Women and Child Affairs GDPAS has implemented "Maternal Stipend Program" in Muladi Upazila and Barisal Sadar Upazila. A total of 1122 lactating mothers has receiving support from the project. The project has provided Capacity building training, awareness raising education on breastfeeding, supplementary food, and income generating activities. The organization has organized Group Meeting, training, advocacy and regarding these issues.

Reduction of Hazardous Child Education Project

With the support of the ministry of Labour and employment; GDPAS Organization has implement this activity since 2005 to 2008. Under this activity 450 under privilege children were learned primary education and six-month skill development training.265 Girls and 185 boys are received education through 15 Education centres.

Capacity Building Training Program

GDPAS organization has provided Human development, organizational development and skill development training to their beneficiaries so that they can contribute in development and formed community-based organization. Under this activities A total of 4630 beneficiaries have received training in various trade/subject. Among them 62 per cent women and 38 males are graduated with various skill and knowledge development training in Water Sanitation and Health promotion, Health Awareness and Capacity building and Management training respectively.

- Capacity building
- Education and training of women
- Human rights of women
- Empowerment of women
- Millennium Development Goals
- Policy advice to Women
- Service provision
- Trafficking in women and girls
- Violence against women
- Women and HIV/AIDS
- Women and health
- Women and poverty
- Women and the economy
- Women and the environment
- Women and the media
- Women in power and decision-making

Training for Mother Health Awareness Development

GDPAS has been operating Poor Mother Maternity Training Program with the support by Directorate of Women Affairs. GDPAS has had been operating 5 years programs for Barisal district with support from small NGO fund of Bangladesh Government. The advocacy program and lobbying to upazila level Poor Mother Maternity Training Program by Directorate of Women Affairs of upazila administration and District Deputy Commissioner's Office to take proper action to needed for women awareness build up training. Holding gathering, seminars and workshops on women awareness build up training and ask the local government authorities to represent and present their opinion for women health care of maternity mother. Bangladesh is one of the 160 countries which signed their commitments to the said world convention.

While the Government feels that these provisions conflict with religious Islamic laws, women feel these reservations infringe upon the protection and promotion of their rights. The unequal treatment of women in Bangladesh sanctioned by the constitution reflects gender-based discrimination in mainstream society. In marriages and separations, for example, women's right of choice is governed by the personal laws that give more importance to social obligation than personal choice.